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JOSEPH SULLIVAN

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SOUTHEAST ASIAN PRESS HITS HANOI'S ARTICLE

ANNCR:

A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY NEWSPAPER, "NHAN DAN," HAS DRAWN HEAVY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY CRITICAL EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN PRESS. THE ARTICLE PROCLAIMED THAT COMMUNIST VICTORIES IN INDOCHINA HAVE CREATED THE IMPETUS FOR REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. "NHAN DAN" ALSO LAUDED THE LONG, BLOODY WAR IN VIETNAM AS A ROAD TO SEIZING POLITICAL POWER. A LOOK NOW AT SOME OF THE PRESS REACTION TO THE HANOI ARTICLE.

ANNCR:

IN THAILAND, A BANGKOK "WORLD" EDITORIAL QUOTES FROM A STATEMENT BY SINGAPORE'S FOREIGN MINISTER SINNATHAMBY RAJARATHAM THAT THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE THE RIGHT, IF THEY CHOOSE, TO REJECT A COMMUNIST FORM OF GOVERNMENT. IN THE PAPER'S WORDS:

VOICE:

"MISTER RAJARATHAM IS RIGHT TO GIVE SUCH A WARNING. HANOI'S THIRST FOR LEADERSHIP OF INSURGENCY MOVEMENTS OUTSIDE VIETNAM CONSTITUTES A BELLIGERENT POSTURE AGAINST ASEAN. HANOI PROBABLY FEELS THAT IT IS NOW OR NEVER BECAUSE THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS SUMMIT LAST WEEK HAS SHOWN THAT INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, THE PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE AND THAILAND WANT TO WORK TOGETHER FOR MUTUAL BENEFITS... IT IS A PITY THAT NORTH VIETNAM HAS URGED UNDERGROUND GROUPS THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST ASIA TO STEP UP THE FIGHT TO OVERTHROW

NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN THE REGION...AND HAS TRIED TO SHAKE THE FOUNDATION FOR MUTUAL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE ASEAN HAS LAID DOWN."

ANNCR:

ANOTHER BANGKOK DAILY, "THE NATION," WARNS THAT NO ONE IS GOING TO GAIN FROM THE GROWING VERBAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ASEAN AND NORTH VIETNAM. REACTION TO THE "NHAN DAN" ARTICLE THE EDITORIAL SAYS, UNDERLINES THE RUNNING SUSPICION THAT ASEAN COUNTRIES ENTERTAIN TOWARD THE NEW COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS OF INDOCHINA. AND IT ADDS:

VOICE:

"ASEAN'S INTENTIONS, HOWEVER DOUBTFUL THEY MAY BE AT THE MOMENT, SHOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE. WE SHUDDER TO THINK THAT A NEW KIND OF 'COLD WAR' MENTALITY HAS SEEPED INTO SOUTHEAST ASIA. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN ASEAN AND INDOCHINA ARE OPEN AND THERE IS NO REASON WHY BOTH SIDES CANNOT SIT DOWN AND HAMMER OUT THEIR PROBLEMS."

ANNCR:

IN INDONESIA, HANOI'S CHARACTERIZATION OF ASEAN AS A "LACKEY OF THE UNITED STATES," MOVED MOST INDONESIAN DAILIES TO ABANDON THEIR USUAL NON-COMMITTAL COMMENT ON DEVELOPMENTS IN VIETNAM. THE MAJOR NATIONAL DAILY "SINAR HARAPAN," IN AN EDITORIAL TYPICAL OF OTHER COMMENT, SAYS:

VOICE:

"WE FIND IT VERY PECULIAR TO READ HANOI'S CRITICISM IN NHAN DAN, ACCUSING ASEAN OF BEING AN AMERICAN LACKEY. IT IS UNREASONABLE AS WELL AS ILLOGICAL. SUCH A STATEMENT IS OBVIOUSLY UNFRIENDLY; IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS THREATENING

AND ENDANGERING A COUNTRY'S SOVEREIGNTY. IT HAS THE MOTIVE OF DISHONORING A COUNTRY'S INTEGRITY AND INTERVENING IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS ...(ACTS) CONTRARY TO THE BANDUNG PRINCIPLES THAT WERE SIGNED BY HANOI IN 1955."

ANNCR:

IN KUALA LUMPUR, THE CHINESE-LANGUAGE "NANYANG SIANG PAO" SAYS IT'S WILLING TO GIVE HANOI THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT, OBSERVING:

VOICE:

"IT IS HOPED HANOI'S UNFRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD ASEAN IS A RESULT OF MISUNDERSTANDING AND THAT THE TRUTH WILL PREVAIL EVENTUALLY. IT WILL BE MOST UNFORTUNATE FOR THE REGION IF THE PEACEFUL AND FRIENDLY GESTURE EXTENDED BY ASEAN IS MISTAKEN AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS. NORTH VIETNAM HAS NO REASON TO BE HOSTILE TOWARD ASEAN AND IMPEDE THE IDEAL OF NEUTRALIZATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA UNLESS SHE INTENDS TO STIR UP NEW CONFLICTS TO ENGULF THE AREA IN NEW HOSTILITIES."

ANNCR:

THE "PENANG STRAITS ECHO" SAYS THE DECLARATIONS BY ASEAN LEADERS BEFORE AND DURING THE SUMMIT AT BALI THAT THE ASSOCIATION WOULD REMAIN NON-MILITARY HAVE EVIDENTLY COUNTED FOR NOTHING WITH NORTH VIETNAM. THE NEWSPAPER ADDS:

VOICE:

"HANOI HAS BARED A SINISTER HAND...BY OFFERING CLEAR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNIST INSURGENCIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. (BUT) ASEAN IS, POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, NOW A STRONGER ORGANIZATION. NO MORE DOMINOES ARE GOING TO FALL -- EITHER THROUGH EXTERNAL PRESSURE OR EXTERNALLY-SUPPORTED INSURGENCY AND SUBVERSION."

ANNCR:

THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "NEW STRAITS TIMES" SAYS OF THE HANOI ARTICLE, "WORDS ARE ONE THING...ACTIONS ARE ANOTHER." IT GOES ON TO OBSERVE:

VOICE:

"NORTH VIETNAM DOES NOT SPEAK FOR INDOCHINA...WHILE THE NEW COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS ARE, IN THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT MARCOS, 'MILITANT IN TEMPER AND MILITANT IN IDEOLOGY,' THEY HAVE YET TO PROVE THAT THEY ARE MILITANT IN ACTUAL ACTION. AND IT IS NOT UNUSAL IN THE CONDUCT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THAT NATIONS HIDE THEIR LACK OF STRONG ACTIONS BEHIND A BARRAGE OF STRONG WORDS. BUT HANOI SHOULD BE INFORMED IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT IT SHOULD WATCH ITS STEP, THAT OTHERS WILL CERTAINLY BE WATCHING IT."

ANNCR:

A CROSS SECTION OF EDITORIAL OPINION FROM THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN PRESS ON HANOI'S CALL FOR STEPPED-UP INSURGENCY IN THE REGION.

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